UNITED
NATIONS

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Security Council

PROVISIONAL

S/PV.3336 (Resumption 2)
15 February 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THREE THOUSAND
THREE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SIXTH MEETING (Resumption 2)

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 15 February 1994, at 10 a.m.

President:	Mr. OLHAYE	(Djibouti)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. CARDENAS
	Brazil	Mr. SARDENBERG
	China	Mr. LI Zhaoxing
	Czech Republic	Mr. KOVANDA
	France	Mr. MERIMEE
	New Zealand	Mr. KEATING
	Nigeria	Mr. UMAR
	Oman	Mr. AL-SAMEEN
	Pakistan	Mr. KHAN
	Russian Federation	Mr. VORONTSOV
	Rwanda	Mr. BIZIMANA
	Spain	Mr. YAÑEZ BARNUEVO
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir David HANNAY
	United States of America	Mrs. ALBRIGHT

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The meeting resumed at 10.45 a.m., Tuesday, 15 February 1994.

The PRESIDENT: The Security Council will now continue its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/1994/173, which contains the text of a letter dated 14 February 1994 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council, transmitting the report of the Co-Chairmen of the Steering Committee of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia.

The next speaker is the representative of Slovenia. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. TÜRK (Slovenia): May I begin by emphasizing how pleased we are to see you, Sir, in the presidency of the Security Council. We continue to admire your work in the Council and your diplomatic skill, and we are convinced that under your guidance the work of the Security Council will be successful, as it was under the exemplary presidency of Ambassador Karel Kovanda of the Czech Republic, who presided over the proceedings of the Council in the month of January.

The war in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina has been raging unconscionably long and has brought untold suffering to the civilian population of that country. Furthermore, it has put in question the very survival of a United Nations Member State and has, consequently, given rise to a very serious challenge to the United Nations system of collective security. These are only the most obvious consequences of the war so far, while all its implications are not yet fully grasped.

The most recent attack against civilians in Sarajevo, on 5 February 1994, has but emphasized the dimensions of the tragedy and has prompted outrage in world public opinion. The need for

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resolute steps and for a renewed effort for peace has been expressed more strongly than ever.

A careful analyst could draw many lessons from the efforts made so far for peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. One of those lessons - perhaps the most important one - is that diplomacy cannot produce good results if it is not guided by realistic and well-informed analysis. In this context, it becomes clear that the nature of war in Bosnia and Herzegovina must be kept clearly in mind. The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina is neither a religious nor an ethnic conflict, nor is it a "three-way civil war", as some observers tend to believe. That war started as a war of aggression against a United Nations Member State, and it has remained, in essence, a war for territorial expansion. The genocidal practice of "ethnic cleansing" directed against Muslims of Bosnia and Herzegovina was devised and carried out as an instrument of war for territorial expansion.

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Another lesson of major importance learned in Bosnia and Herzegovina is that diplomacy without strength is fruitless when confronted with forces of aggression. In Bosnia this has been for far too long a sad and basic feature of the conflict.

However, a more realistic approach seems to be emerging: for almost two years, it has been clear that the removal of heavy weapons from the vicinity of cities and other places with high concentrations of civilians is an essential prerequisite for a genuine cease-fire and, consequently, for a successful search for peace. Proposals to that effect were many, but none was heeded.

It is therefore very important that, just recently, the need for effective action to withdraw heavy weapons from the vicinity of Sarajevo was recognized. The pertinent provisions of the resolutions adopted earlier by the Security Council have started to gain credibility. It is commendable that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has reacted to recent developments promptly and adequately.

The United Nations and world public opinion are now awaiting the actual and complete withdrawal of heavy weapons from the vicinity of Sarajevo and, should the need arise, steps to ensure that those weapons are effectively removed, and thus that the initial conditions for a genuine cease-fire are established.

It is our firm opinion that strong support for all the steps that are being taken or ought to be taken in this context is the main objective of the present meeting of the Security Council.

While duly focusing on the most urgent aspect of the situation, the Security Council should not lose sight of the broader perspective. There is an urgent need to develop a realistic framework for peace in the Balkans. The tragedy of

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Bosnia and Herzegovina is the most dramatic aspect of the broader security problem in the area. Let us not forget that the concentration of arms and armed personnel in the territories of the immediate neighbours of Bosnia and Herzegovina represents in itself a problem for international peace and security. Hundreds of thousands of men are under arms, and this growth in armed forces has confronted the international community with a creeping change in the balance of power. It is regrettable indeed that during the present debate in the Security Council we have not heard assurances concerning the withdrawal of foreign troops from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The efforts for peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been evolving for almost two years. The need to develop an imaginative framework for these efforts is ever-present. My Government has been aware of this need for a long time, and has made several proposals in this context. Let me recall, by way of illustration, the proposals made by my Government between July 1992 and April 1993 concerning the establishment of safe areas in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Just recently, on 7 February this year, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia formulated a four-point appeal containing the four basic points which, in our view, represent the core elements of such a framework. The appeal was also circulated as a document of the General Assembly and of the Security Council (S/1994/129).

The first point of the appeal contains a demand for the withdrawal of heavy weapons from the vicinity of Sarajevo and other areas with a high concentration of civilian population. This demand is already being taken up by the international community, and has already begun to be acted on.

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The second demand in the appeal concerns the unimpeded delivery of humanitarian assistance to the civilian population in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This should include unimpeded access by the civilian population to water, electricity and gas.

Thirdly, my Government considers that the restoration of private property and the safeguarding of places of worship are indispensable requirements for the peace process actually to proceed.

Fourthly, the return of the territories seized by force and "ethnic cleansing" should begin without delay.

We believe that the present situation and the determination of the international community make these demands realistic and indeed achievable - if they are persistently pursued. We wish to emphasize especially the need for the return of territories seized by force to begin without delay.

Deeds are necessary as proof of good faith. It is never too ambitious to demand proof of good faith, and in a situation characterized by so many broken promises it is a must.

The determination of the international community that has been expressed in the past few days should be translated into a sustained effort. Careful reflection on the question of what the necessary ingredients for real peace are will be necessary, and in this context wide support from United Nations Member States should be rallied. The four-point appeal presented by the Government of Slovenia represents a contribution in this regard.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Slovenia for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Algeria. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. LAMAMRA (Algeria) (interpretation from French): It is a great pleasure for me to extend to you, Sir, my delegation's warmest congratulations on your accession to the presidency of the Council. I am delighted to see the Permanent Representative of Djibouti, a friendly, fraternal country, leading the Council's deliberations with such skill and effectiveness at a time when the Council is dealing with the recent developments in one of the most serious crises that the international community has had to confront.

I should also like to congratulate your predecessor, Ambassador Kovanda, on his masterful performance last month.

For almost two years now, the tragic situation being experienced by the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina has constantly and powerfully troubled the world's conscience. The massacre caused by the shelling of Sarajevo's central market-place was the climax of the throes of horror in a conflict that challenges the essential values of the human race at a time when the qualitative change in international relations could give us legitimate grounds for hoping that the community of nations would quite naturally be demanding and ready to help when the rights of the weakest peoples, those most exposed to forcible attack, request proper international protection.

The massacre of 5 February, which aroused great indignation throughout the world, is, however, just one more crime to add to all the other crimes against humanity that have been overtly

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committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and that have so far gone unpunished.

The frightful tragedies that have been the daily lot and portion of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina since it was admitted to membership in the United Nations as a sovereign, independent and peaceful State; the frenzied efforts to dismember its territory under the cover of the waves of aggression and violence that are reducing its population to a sub-human state: these bear stark witness to the dithering and reluctance that have doomed the actions and the reactions of our Organization to an ineffectiveness that does the Organization's credibility no good at all.

The extremely difficult conditions that have been imposed on the activities of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and the humanitarian organizations - whose laudable presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina in fact symbolizes the international community's desire not to shirk its responsibilities - have all demonstrated the need for the United Nations to acquire the means to implement a policy of firmness capable of deterring, discouraging and thwarting the attempts at genocide of which the Bosnian people have been the victims.

If no such policy on the part of a united and determined international community is forthcoming, the many resolutions of the Security Council, unfortunately, will not have spared us the horrors of "ethnic cleansing", or forestalled the acquisition of territory by force, nor will they have safeguarded Sarajevo or the five other "safe areas" from armed aggression.

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The 5 February massacre gave searing relevance to the objectives and actions set out in resolutions 824 (1993) and 836 (1993). Using every appropriate means to neutralize the military force holding Bosnian civilians hostage in Sarajevo and other parts of the country is now an imperative element of any effort to bring about conditions for genuine negotiations.

At the same time, it is morally and politically important for the Council to state its recognition of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina's inherent right of self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, and the associated right to seek and obtain assistance in preserving its sovereignty and its territorial integrity.

The current Security Council debate should put an end to the tendency to acquiesce in faits accomplis in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It should also demonstrate that the international community has once more seized the initiative. Finally, it should give hope to the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly its Muslim component, which has been the victim of unspeakable ordeals, by demonstrating the mobilization of the international community to safeguard the right of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina to exist.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Algeria for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Jordan. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. BATAINEH (Jordan) (interpretation from Arabic): Let me begin, Sir, by congratulating you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. We are

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confident that you will skilfully guide the Council's deliberations to the desired success through your wisdom, experience and ability.

I wish also to thank your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Karel Kovanda of the Czech Republic, for the skill with which he guided the Council's work last month.

It is striking that the Security Council's current discussion of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is taking place in a framework quite different from that surrounding previous debates. Unfortunately, this meeting was not convened on the initiative of the Council itself in reaction to the deterioration of the situation and the ongoing tragedy in Bosnia and Herzegovina. That deterioration, which can be charted as a descending curve, is the result of a lack of determination by the Security Council to implement its resolutions - perhaps because, as the situation becomes commonplace, so too does living with it.

This meeting will not culminate in the normal practice of adopting a resolution reflecting the thinking expressed throughout the deliberations. None the less, my delegation appreciates your efforts, Mr. President, and thanks you for convening the meeting, which comes in the aftermath of the heinous carnage perpetrated on 5 February 1994 against besieged innocent civilians in Sarajevo - a city the Security Council has declared a safe area.

We might have wished for the Council to meet on its own initiative to put an end to the reasons for and consequences of the moral, political and humanitarian tragedy of the Bosnian Muslims, which has nearly reached the point of absurdity. We still hope for this, and my country, Jordan, continues to wish it.

My country is the second largest troop-contributing State in the former Yugoslavia. We call upon the Security Council to work

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seriously to take all measures authorized by the Charter of the United Nations to implement Security Council resolutions adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter.

In the context of the events that led to this meeting, my delegation wishes to state, first, that the barbaric attack on the market-place in Sarajevo and the resulting carnage cannot be isolated from the other chapters of the tragedy of the Bosnian Muslims. Nor can it be isolated from the shortcomings of the international system. In terms of the norms of conduct governing international relations, this terrorist act is a black mark. It occurred in the framework of systematic Serb activities that would have been impossible had the aggressor felt that the international community was serious about shouldering its responsibilities under the Charter and with respect to the implementation of even one of the resolutions the Security Council has adopted on the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina under Chapter VII.

As proof, I note that the carnage took place in a locality the Council, in resolution 824 (1993), had declared a safe area. The Council, indeed, went on in a subsequent resolution - resolution 836 (1993) - to specify the machinery by which its safety would be guaranteed. That resolution also laid down a clear framework for using all necessary means, including air strikes, to guarantee the safety and security of the area and the security of the personnel of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) stationed there.

What is the significance of the choice of that area for the carnage, and of the earlier bombardments of the same area as attested to by UNPROFOR? I would have liked to think that the answer was connected to the short-sightedness of the aggressor and to its past flouting of Security Council resolutions. That

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explanation would be the lesser of two evils, for the other interpretation is that the aggressor is fully convinced that the Security Council adopted its resolutions on Bosnia and Herzegovina and on the safe areas not with a view to implementing them, but with a view only to marketing them.

If that is true, the failure to redress the situation will involve moral, legal and political repercussions for the political and peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and will have dire consequences for the credibility of the United Nations and the collective security system in general.

Secondly, in that light, there can logically be no balance or serious progress in the political negotiations on the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina if the militarily superior Serb party feels it can achieve its political and military objectives and demands unilaterally, through military force, with impunity.

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Thus the Council and all the States concerned, if they truly want the peace process to be successful, must act accordingly, sending the correct message to the Serbian party, one that will serve this purpose and not the contrary one.

Suffice it to say, to prove my point, that the Bosnian Muslims' responsiveness in the face of this grim international scenario, and their acceptance on the negotiating table of various ideas and difficult solutions, was not enough to curb the appetite and greed of the Serbian side. That side unilaterally rejects the solutions accepted, albeit hesitantly, by the Bosnian Muslims and all other participants, or accepts and then rejects them, since it sincerely believes that its atrocities against the Bosnian Muslims have been met with silence, and interprets this silence as encouragement of its policy. It seems to feel that the Council is determined to maintain the military imbalance between the Serbs and their victims, and that it will fail to provide protection for the victims.

How can political negotiations succeed in such a situation? And if they do succeed, how can the Muslim people of Bosnia and Herzegovina be guaranteed that the settlement will be just? How can they believe that peace will be guaranteed in the region afterwards?

Thirdly, resolution 713 (1991) of 25 September 1991, which deprived the Muslim people of Bosnia and Herzegovina of the means of self-defence, becomes in this context a biased and unjust resolution. It also runs counter to the provisions of Article 51 of the Charter, since the embargo provided for in the resolution, which deprives the Bosnian people of the inalienable right to self-defence, has not gone hand in hand with the international

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community's defence and protection of the weak Bosnian side. Nor has any legal explanation been demanded. This has widened the military imbalance between the two parties and enabled the Serbian side, which has remained in contact with the heirs to the military might of the six Republics, to achieve success against the territories and people of Bosnia, who, alone under siege, were in effect the only subjects of the arms embargo. Reports indicate that parties in Serbia are still providing their agents and militia in Bosnia with all types of weapons. This has motivated the international community to call on the Security Council by General Assembly resolution 48/88, to exclude the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina from the unjust and unbalanced embargo to enable it to defend itself.

Fourthly, paragraphs 1 and 2 of Article 24 of the Charter make us feel entitled to say that the failure of the Security Council, which should act as an agent of the international community, to address the humanitarian, political, security and military situations that have prevailed for the last two years in Bosnia and Herzegovina throws into serious question entire Chapters of the Charter, particularly Chapters VI, VII, VIII and XII. They are the ones that define, among other things, the conduct of the Security Council in discharging its duties in the name of the United Nations and its principles. Perhaps Member States should undertake consultations with the Security Council about the obstacles that prevented it from implementing its own resolutions and carrying out the duties entrusted to it to protect the security, sovereignty and territorial integrity of a small Member State. That State relied upon it and had nothing but the will of its people, whose human rights, including their right to life, have been violated by a

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neighbouring aggressor State which has acquired supremacy by all military means, at a time when the ideals of freedom, democracy and human rights take priority on the agenda of the international community.

In the light of what I have already said, I would like to emphasize the following. First, my Government does not believe in imposed settlements. It believes that permanent and just solutions leading to the establishment of peace in any conflict, whether regional or international, can be implemented by negotiated political settlements that guarantee the legitimate rights of all sides, and not by resorting to military force. However, diplomacy alone cannot always achieve this goal, especially if miscalculations or wrongful intentions take hold in the minds of some parties to the conflict. This has been the situation as far as the Serbian side is concerned for the last two years. In this case, military intervention has become imperative, especially when the people of Bosnia are deprived of their right to acquire the means for self-defence, in order to force the Serbian aggressors seriously to address the peace process in good faith, to force them to view it as the only way to settle the problem.

The situation in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the circumstances facing the Muslim people, including the recent carnage and the bombardment on 4 February 1994 of a safe area in Bosnia, make it incumbent upon the international community to act immediately, particularly in the light of paragraphs 9 and 10 of resolution 836 (1993), which provide a legal framework for air strikes. We see no need for the Security Council to adopt a new resolution to implement this task, which we hope will be the first step to ending the tragedy and to forcing the Serbian side to

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accept a peaceful, just settlement. Air strikes by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) are compatible with paragraph 10 of that resolution, which enables Member States to undertake air strikes through regional organizations or arrangements should safe areas be bombarded. NATO might also have to fulfil obligations delegated to it by the United Nations on behalf of the international community. We welcome and encourage the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General, and support the contents of his letter of 6 February 1994 to the Secretary-General of NATO, and the positive response by NATO to that letter.

Secondly, while expressing our condolences to the Government and people of Bosnia and to the families of the victims of the marketplace carnage, we would like to reiterate the need to identify the perpetrators and bring them to justice. Whoever they were, they must be tried as terrorists and war criminals.

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This is a moral and legal obligation that the international community must meet.

Thirdly, serious measures must be taken immediately to lift the siege on Sarajevo and other besieged areas and to provide protection to UNPROFOR personnel in that region, in the other "safe areas" and in all parts of Bosnia. Security Council resolution 770 (1992) must be implemented so that the flow of humanitarian and relief assistance to the various areas is guaranteed. The Tuzla airport must also be opened, and this must not be subject to any political bargaining.

Fourthly, effective steps must be taken immediately to put an end to the policy of "ethnic cleansing" and to pursue and bring to justice those who have committed these crimes. The inadmissibility of the acquisition of territories by force must be acknowledged and anything gained thereby must be regarded as null and void. The right of all Bosnian refugees to return to their homes must be guaranteed. Furthermore, all detention camps must be shut down.

Finally, we hope that NATO will insist on implementing all the provisions of its ultimatum. A small window of hope for the peace process in Bosnia has opened, and NATO should not allow such an opportunity to be lost. We also hope that the Council will escape from the circle of inaction in which it has been caught and will shoulder its responsibilities under the Charter so that it can work to put an end to the aggression and the atrocities committed against the people and Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina and bring hope back to that small country which is trying to free itself of the shackles of the cold war.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Jordan for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Tunisia. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. ABDELLAH (Tunisia) (interpretation from Arabic): At the outset, Sir, I would like, on behalf of the Tunisian delegation, to congratulate you most sincerely on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. We are convinced that the Council will be able to discharge its difficult tasks effectively because of your experience and skill and the respect and esteem you enjoy.

I would also like to express all my gratitude to your predecessor, His Excellency Ambassador Karel Kovanda, for having successfully presided over the work of the Council last month.

The Council is now meeting to consider serious developments in the crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the wake of the horrendous massacre in which dozens of powerless and innocent civilians in Sarajevo were killed. This is another crime to be added to those already perpetrated by the Serbs against the Bosnian people during the last two years - crimes equalled in atrocity only by those committed by the Nazis during the Second World War. It is but one episode in a long series of aggressions and violations perpetrated against an independent and sovereign Member State of the United Nations.

It is high time that the international community acted firmly and imposed implementation of the many resolutions adopted on this subject by this Council and the General Assembly. Indeed, the Serb aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina has continued and even grown worse because the impression has been given to the leaders of Serbia and Montenegro and to the Bosnian Serbs that the world is

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not serious about resisting that aggression and is not determined to put an end to all these heinous crimes such as "ethnic cleansing", rape, murder and the displacement of populations.

Despite the Security Council resolutions relating to the "safe areas", the capital city has been under siege for more than two years. Not a day has gone by without the Serb forces launching attacks against the inhabitants of Sarajevo and other cities of Bosnia and disrupting the delivery of food and humanitarian aid. How often have we taken note, here in the United Nations - the most recent date being 4 February 1994 - that all these attacks have obviously been carried out by Serbs.

It is not surprising that, while shock was being expressed in the world at the sight of mutilated bodies swimming in blood in the Sarajevo market-place, the leader of the Bosnian Serbs maintained that the attack did not come from the Serb side. What is amazing, however, is that there are some who actually believed him - as though earlier events did not contradict him. In distorting the facts, the Serbs are clearly attempting to evade their responsibility for this heinous act so as not to have to take the consequences.

The general outcry of international public opinion has had its effect: it pushed the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) into adopting a position rapidly and decisively on 9 February. This is an important development, long awaited by the international community, particularly after the serious deterioration of the situation in a country which lies at the very heart of Europe, and above all in the very sensitive Balkan region. The Serbs must therefore immediately heed this warning and refrain from attacking the city, withdraw from its vicinity and place their heavy weapons

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under the control of the United Nations. The slightest failure to comply on their part should immediately result in air strikes, without any hesitation. Security Council resolutions 824 (1993) and 836 (1993) authorize the Secretary-General to call for such attacks without having recourse to the Security Council. These two resolutions truly provide the legal foundation for confronting any developments of this kind.

Although the NATO ultimatum requires that the victim surrender its weapons after the aggressors have done so, the Bosnian party has nevertheless voluntarily handed over its heavy weapons, the number of which had, in any event, decreased, along with its ability to exercise its right to self-defence.

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We must reconsider resolution 713 (1991), which imposed the arms embargo - an embargo which paralysed only the Bosnian side, whereas the Serb forces have huge quantities of heavy weapons. The lifting of the embargo against the Muslims might convince the Bosnian Serbs that they will not be able to carry out their expansionist aims and impose a fait accompli by committing aggression.

The ultimatum by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) represents an important step forward, and its implementation must be monitored with great determination and seriousness. In our view, this ultimatum should apply to all the other "safe areas", including Bihac, Srebrenica, Gorazde, Tuzla and Zepa, as well as to Sarajevo. Otherwise, the Serb forces will take advantage of the fact that the world is looking only at the capital city and will launch attacks against other "safe areas". Therefore, it would be wise to deal with every aggression in any of these areas with the same threat of the use of force by NATO.

If we want negotiations to succeed and be productive, NATO's ultimatum must apply to all regions in order to ensure that these acts of aggression cease and to induce the guilty party to accept a peaceful, just and lasting solution.

No settlement can be peaceful, just and lasting if it is based on "ethnic cleansing" or the acquisition of territory by force, or if it leads to the displacement of populations and the murder of civilians merely because of their identity. In serious negotiations, we certainly cannot recognize the results of aggression as the basis for a settlement. The real legal basis is clearly linked to the resolutions adopted by the Security Council and the General Assembly. The provisions of the Charter of the

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United Nations must also be respected, for this is a framework which the negotiators must abide by. Otherwise, they would be derogating from the norms of international law.

Therefore, we demand that from now on the negotiations take place in New York, in close proximity to the Security Council. We should also bring to justice those responsible for the bloodshed and for "ethnic cleansing". They should be brought before the International Tribunal on war crimes in the former Yugoslavia, which should pronounce judgement on them and ensure that they will never again engage in such acts of genocide. We also demand that measures be taken quickly to appoint a prosecutor and to begin an inquiry into the crimes committed against the Bosnian people.

The Security Council has adopted many resolutions concerning this issue, but none have been implemented. Today, after the warning issued by NATO, the international community is demonstrating a firm will to put an end to the massacres and to find the ways and means to do so. The decision taken by the Secretary-General to allow NATO to launch air strikes can be put into effect if the Serbs fail to respect the cease-fire or delay in withdrawing to their assigned positions. Therefore the matter is today in the hands of the Secretary-General and the leaders of NATO, acting on behalf of the Member States of the United Nations.

We hope that the goal of the attacks launched a week ago by the Serbs against Sarajevo and of the Serbs' procrastination, aimed at establishing new conditions that will induce the defenders of the city to withdraw, is not simply to test the reaction of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) or that it is just a prelude to the perpetration of the kind of violations to which we have become accustomed. If that were indeed the case, no pretext

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whatsoever would remain for not taking a rapid and firm decision to launch air strikes before the expiration of the 10-day time-frame provided for.

The international community is now facing a difficult test. The credibility of the Security Council is also at stake, and any hesitation or delay could distort the message sent to the Serbs and, in the final analysis, lead to new conflicts in the region, therefore endangering international peace and security and destabilizing the international order.

The policy of double standards undermines the authority, the prestige and the influence of the United Nations. Even if we were to try to justify all of this, we could not persuade the peoples of the world that such positions are fair, because they are contrary to law and the idea of justice. Consequently, we urge the Security Council to enhance the confidence of the peoples of the world in the United Nations as a last resort for States that are victims of external aggression, so that the United Nations can guarantee the inviolability of their territories, their national sovereignty and their political independence and protect them from the threats of partition or extinction.

What is happening in Bosnia and Herzegovina is quite simply external aggression against a sovereign State - an act of aggression perpetrated by a neighbouring State which is trying to exploit the ethnic factor to prevent the cultural and political coexistence of the diverse elements of a single society whose origins are, after all, the same. We are convinced, after all the statements we heard yesterday from the representatives of the permanent members of the Council and the representatives of the members of NATO, that NATO forces will put the ultimatum into

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effect if the Serb side does not respect the conditions which have been imposed upon it.

The Tunisian Government has already condemned and deplored the tragic events of 5 February as well as earlier events of this kind. We hope that the attitude of the Security Council and of NATO will represent a decisive turning point and will put an end to the tragedy in Bosnia and Herzegovina - which has already gone on for far too long - making possible the restoration of the rule of law and guaranteeing the existence of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a State unified on the basis of coexistence, in a climate of security and stability.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Tunisia for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Albania. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. KULLA (Albania) (interpretation from French): I should like first of all, Sir, to express my great respect for you and my congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of February. I am firmly convinced that under your guidance the Council will be successful in its work this month. I should also like to extend my great appreciation to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Karel Kovanda, who skilfully presided over the deliberations of the Council last month. Finally, on behalf of my Government, I should like to extend warmest congratulations to the new members of the Council and offer them my best wishes for success.

We have been brought here once again to discuss one of the most troubling issues of our day: the tragic conflict persisting in Bosnia and Herzegovina. What was done to the civilian Muslim population in the Sarajevo market-place was an assault against all humanity, a shameful act whose authors must be severely punished.

The Republic of Albania offers its resolute support for the efforts of the Secretary-General and of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to defend the civilian population of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and to carry out unimpeded all the operations for the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

It is precisely in this context that the Republic of Albania welcomed NATO's decisions regarding action to be taken against Serbian military positions. This will contribute significantly to ending the hostilities and then to achieving the desired peace agreement.

We still hold to our previously stated opinion that if the sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro had been backed up by appropriate military operations the conflict would not have escalated to anywhere near the present terrible level.

(Mr. Kulla, Albania)

The Republic of Albania cannot but believe that it is now time to implement and give credibility to the resolutions of this Council. Reaffirming our support for those resolutions, we call for attention to be paid to other regions of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and particularly to the safe areas. Resolutions 824 (1993) and 836 (1993) provide the necessary framework for the protection of the safe areas through, inter alia, cooperation with regional organizations.

The arms embargo imposed on the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina has deprived the most threatened and weakest party to the conflict of the possibility of defending itself. The continuation of the arms embargo against the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina has encouraged the aggressors, and naturally we have seen them persist, without fear, in committing more and more acts of genocide against the Muslim people.

The Republic of Albania continues to support the negotiation process, mediated in the main by the United Nations and the European Union. It is reasonable to believe that an agreement can be reached. In this connection, we stress that international pressure on the aggressor would contribute fundamentally to stopping the war, while, on the other hand, any form of pressure on the weaker party would produce only an unstable peace and would have lasting, dangerous consequences. At the same time, the legitimization of gains made through "ethnic cleansing", and particularly any plan for division of Bosnia and Herzegovina along ethnic lines created artificially by "ethnic cleansing", would lead only to a situation that could explode at any time.

The Republic of Albania considers that the implementation of economic sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro was a key moment

(Mr. Kulla, Albania)

in the efforts of the United Nations to settle the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. The sanctions have already had a great effect by forcing the Serb party to accept the strict necessity of sitting down at the negotiating table. On the other hand, the full effect of the sanctions in weakening the military machinery of Belgrade, which for two years has fed the war in the former Yugoslavia, has yet to be seen. It is essential that the sanctions be strictly implemented in order to reach a long-term solution to the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in other hot spots that, unfortunately, also make up the Yugoslav crisis.

I think that I express a view that is not solely that of my Government when I emphasize that in the meantime other measures are necessary so that this conflict does not spread elsewhere. I hope that my delegation will be allowed to draw the Council's attention to the worrisome situation in Kosovo, formerly an autonomous province of the former Yugoslavia, where more than 2 million Albanians have lived since time immemorial. The Belgrade regime pursues a policy of police and military repression there, thus violating all human rights guaranteed in international documents.

This subject is not out of place in this meeting. Quite the contrary: it has to do with the same tragic question, the same instigator, "ethnic cleansing" and the same strategy, all of which herald a war that the Serbs have already started unilaterally, one in which the Albanians of Kosovo, with admirable forbearance, are not taking part.

On behalf of my Government, I wish to reiterate that Kosovo should be put under United Nations observation and protection so that a new conflict does not break out near Bosnia, a conflict that would have irreversible consequences for world peace.

(Mr. Kulla, Albania)

Allow me to conclude by expressing my conviction that this open debate in the Security Council will make an important contribution to harmonizing the efforts of all to put an end to the bloodletting in Bosnia and Herzegovina and to achieve peace in the former Yugoslavia.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Albania for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Senegal. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. CISSE (Senegal) (interpretation from French): Allow me on behalf of the Senegalese delegation to express to you, Sir, our joy and pride at seeing you assume the presidency of the Security Council for the month of February. Well aware of your virtues, your skill and your vast experience, I am confident of your ability to lead the work of the Council with wisdom and effectiveness. I should also like to express our warmest congratulations and reiterate that you have our full support in the exercise of your responsibilities.

I must also express our gratitude to your predecessor, Ambassador Kovanda, Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic, for his outstanding work in the month of January.

We are also grateful to all the members of the Council for having allowed the holding of this important meeting on the tragic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina to be held.

For almost two years the international community has helplessly witnessed the slow agony of the people of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who with courage, dignity and faith are facing aggression whose savagery and barbarity have reached

(Mr. Cissé, Senegal)

proportions that never cease to shock our collective conscience and that call into question the fundamental values on which the Charter of our Organization is based.

(Mr. Cissé, Senegal)

The shelling of Sarajevo on Friday, 4 February, and Saturday, 5 February, which have aroused an unprecedented wave of outrage and condemnation throughout the world, are indeed proof that, encouraged by the lethargy of the international community, the Bosnian Serbs and their allies in their ignoble cause will now stop at nothing, not even at the unbelievable horror of firing on a dense crowd of civilians.

For the 22 months that this conflict has now lasted, the effective solutions that might have avoided the escalation in the violence have always been ruled out until after their effectiveness has been voided by the escalating aggression. This delay in reacting to the ongoing genocide - a delay we have been trying to catch up on by taking steps or making threats while the situation on the ground has gone from bad to worse - is the main reason behind massacres that we so deeply deplore today.

How often have we heard echoed the Bosnian pleas for the withdrawal - if necessary, by force - of the Serb heavy weapons that daily pound Sarajevo and the other Bosnian towns? What has not been done to persuade the Security Council that, unless energetic action is taken - such as air raids against the Serb positions encircling Sarajevo, control of heavy weapons by the United Nations Protection Force and, if necessary, the lifting of the arms embargo on those who are being massacred - we will always be one war too late? We are now close to believing that to do nothing against these massacres is to aid the aggressors.

Fortunately, it is possibly because of that conviction that, in response to the request by the Secretary-General of our Organization, the North Atlantic Council, at its meeting of 9 February 1994 in Brussels, took a set of decisions that, if they

(Mr. Cissé, Senegal)

are implemented, could, we hope, put an end to the siege of Sarajevo.

In a letter dated 14 February 1994 - yesterday - addressed to Heads of State or Government of the permanent members of the Security Council or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), President Abdou Diouf, as President of the sixth summit meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, after welcoming the efforts made to settle the Bosnian tragedy, recalled

> "the particular importance that our peoples attach to the implementation by the international community of vigorous steps to put an end to the Serb aggression and the injustices imposed on the Bosnian people".

The Head of State of Senegal, in that respect, welcomed

> "the courageous steps approved by NATO and, above all, the ultimatum which that organization has issued to the Bosnian Serbs to lift the siege of Sarajevo."

The Senegalese delegation therefore welcomes the ultimatum that has been issued to the forces of aggression, and urges the Secretary-General of our Organization and those in charge of NATO, acting on behalf of the entire membership of the United Nations within the framework of the authority vested in them under the relevant provisions of resolutions 824 (1993) and 836 (1993), to take all necessary steps to ensure immediate compliance with decisions taken in the event that they are violated.

We believe that if peace is to be given a real chance the aggressors must understand that the international community is determined to stand in their way and will no longer tolerate any violation of the norms set out in the Charter of our Organization

(Mr. Cissé, Senegal)

and in the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions on the issue.

The attitude of the aggressor in the light of NATO's firmness and determination strengthens our conviction that the wording of the 9 February communiqué was the only one capable of helping establish favourable conditions for finding a negotiated solution that is acceptable to all the parties to the conflict. However, words alone are not enough; experience, unfortunately, pretty much proves this, and tragically, too: what we need to do is act, and act fast.

We are convinced that the leaders of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who have on many occasions in the past demonstrated their good will and their commitment to peace, are of a mind to continue negotiations and to try to find a solution to the conflict that is in accordance with the principles set out in the Charter of the United Nations and in the relevant Security Council resolutions.

However, as far as the Serb party is concerned, even if it does continue to talk about negotiations, we can conclude only that it is doing so merely in order to gain time and carry through its policy of "ethnic cleansing" and territorial conquest.

As we hold this debate in this Chamber, and while the world's attention is fixed on the situation in Sarajevo, in Srebrenica, Gorazde, Tuzla, Zepa and Bihac and their environs - and although those towns have been declared "safe areas" - the civilian population is suffering, far from the eyes of the television cameras, the same encirclement and the same relentless attacks.

The situation is particularly critical in Bihac, where the Bosnian defence lines may well collapse at any moment under

(Mr. Cissé, Senegal)

increased pressure from the Serbs, whose intention it is to occupy the town and exterminate its populace.

We believe that the threat of the use of force in Sarajevo should be extended to cover the entire territory, and particularly the five other "safe areas", where the civilian population continues to suffer repugnant acts of Serb terrorism.

In the communiqué released on 7 February, the Contact Group of the member countries of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) reaffirmed the OIC's determination, should the international community fail in its moral, political and legal responsibilities to use air strikes against the aggressors, to launch a vigorous campaign to ensure that the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina can exercise its inherent right to self-defence, in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter.

The Senegalese delegation, which firmly supports that position, believes that the Security Council ought to make it clear that the arms embargo imposed under resolution 713 (1991) does not apply to the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and that countries, either bilaterally or multilaterally, can provide assistance to a State Member of our Organization that is being attacked, and that such assistance can include providing defensive weapons.

Those who today are busily seeking to impede the implementation of NATO's decisions should demonstrate their credibility by proving to the international community that they are truly desirous of and committed to finding a negotiated and peaceful solution to the conflict. We believe that those countries should discharge their international responsibilities and use their influence with their Serb allies to make them understand that the

(Mr. Cissé, Senegal)

acquisition of territory by force and through "ethnic cleansing" cannot be condoned or rewarded.

The time has now passed for mouthing good intentions; it is time now for action to restore peace to Bosnia and Herzegovina and to restore its people's rights. This is our point of view, and we therefore call upon the international community to continue to show vigilance and firmness in order to scotch all the campaigns aimed at breaching the diplomatic and economic isolation of Serbia and Montenegro. So long as there is no just and lasting peace, as long as the policy of contributing to the death throes of Bosnia and Herzegovina prevails in Belgrade, that isolation will have to be maintained or even strengthened.

(Mr. Cissé, Senegal)

If NATO's military threat paves the way for serious peace negotiations, we think it very important that, unlike previous talks, these should not stray from the settlement framework described by the Security Council and the General Assembly in their resolutions on the subject. To that end, negotiations should be moved to New York and placed under the direct supervision of the Security Council.

The events in Sarajevo and the ongoing attacks in Bihac are clear proof - if proof were still needed - of the need to bring to justice all those responsible for the atrocities committed since the beginning of the tragic conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, including those who, under orders from Belgrade, are carrying out the most ghastly acts of genocide.

In that connection, the activities of the Commission of Inquiry should continue, and further efforts should be made to name a new prosecutor determined to bring before the International Tribunal all war criminals who have committed clearly identified acts on the territory of the former Yugoslavia.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Senegal for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Colombia. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. REY (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): Let me begin, Mr. President, by thanking you for having convened this meeting. I am pleased to see you in the Chair when the Council is gathered on such an important occasion.

The Security Council is meeting today to put an end to the indifference and silence over the massacre of a defenceless people. We are nonplussed by the barbarities committed against a nation

(Mr. Rey, Colombia)

that is a State Member of the United Nations and the inability of the international community to put an end to the situation. The foreign aggression to which Bosnia and Herzegovina is a victim calls for a decisive United Nations presence. The tragedy of that people is of concern to all States Members of the United Nations, and the Organization cannot remain idle in the face of the conflict.

In the past we have seen the United Nations take military action to protect the victims of massacres. We have also seen the United Nations impose and maintain sanctions in other areas as a contribution to resolving conflicts. So we wonder why it has taken so long for the international community to find the ways and means of halting the present massacre of the Bosnian Muslims.

We have seen the Security Council meet on many occasions to consider the tragedy in Bosnia and Herzegovina and adopt numerous resolutions and presidential statements in response to the conflict. But, regrettably, despite the measures adopted by the Council, some of them under Chapter VII of the Charter, the United Nations has been unable properly to protect the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We recall that Article 24 of the Charter gives the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Council should unquestionably and without delay shoulder its responsibility to prevent further massacres like the one carried out on 5 February against civilians in a Sarajevo market-place - a demonstration of Serb barbarism.

The international community has tolerated this terrorism for too long. It has the moral obligation and the legal authority,

(Mr. Rey, Colombia)

granted by Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, to put an end to the situation and respond vigorously to this dizzying escalation of crimes against a defenceless people.

In this case, the United Nations has the necessary tools, as stipulated in Security Council resolutions 824 (1993) and 836 (1993), to act firmly. We welcome the decision taken by the North Atlantic Council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and we hope that the Serbs will meet the conditions laid down in that decision.

By supporting General Assembly resolutions 46/242, 47/121 and 48/88, Colombia reiterated its call for a cease-fire, for respect for the independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, for compliance with United Nations resolutions and for respect for human rights, its condemnation of the practice of "ethnic cleansing" and its demand for an end to Serb terrorism. We agree with paragraphs 17 and 18 of resolution 48/88 of 20 December 1993.

On the basis of respect for the machinery of the Charter and for the accepted practices of the Organization, we recognize the efforts and the heroic mission of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR); we urge the Council to comply with existing resolutions, and we urge the international community to stand by a people that has been the victim of an atrocious tragedy. The international community cannot remain silent in the face of this conflict, with its appalling implications for the peaceful coexistence of peoples.

We call for effective action by the Organization, but we also call upon the parties to the conflict to begin true rapprochement, with commitment, to achieve a peaceful, lasting and just solution.

(Mr. Rey, Colombia)

A high priority must be the reconciliation of peoples which have coexisted for generations, as must respect for life, pluralism and ethnic, religious and cultural diversity. It is the responsibility of those who are now sowing desolation and terror to think about future generations.

Finding rational ways towards a peaceful, permanent solution supported by the international community must be the legacy by which we build a State that can become an exemplar of tolerance, pluralism and democracy.

Today we call upon the parties to the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina to engage in a process of reconciliation respecting the interests of the victims, the United Nations, the Security Council and the international community as a whole, with a view to adopting effective, concrete measures that will help put an end to the fighting and to the massacre.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Colombia for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Finland. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. BREITENSTEIN (Finland): Let me first say how grateful my delegation is for having been granted permission to address the Council on the very important item now before it.

The Government of Finland has followed the situation in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina with the greatest concern. The recent tragic and atrocious shelling of the civilian population in Sarajevo underlines the necessity finally to end the mindless carnage that has already been going on for two years.

In our view, the objective of the international efforts in this crisis still remains unchanged: a negotiated peace settlement between the parties, to be achieved with full and active support of the United Nations and other international bodies. Violence against civilians has to be stopped. Humanitarian assistance must be allowed to reach the population in all circumstances. To ensure that the United Nations can accomplish its mission and retain its credibility, pressure on the parties, and especially on those responsible for the violence, has to be increased.

In this situation Finland welcomes the readiness of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to support the efforts of the United Nations, as requested by the Secretary-General and in conformity with the objectives set by the Security Council.

However, when military means are resorted to, there is always the risk that the conflict will spread and hostilities will intensify. Militarily this kind of situation could be very difficult to contain. It would also increase risks to the safety of United Nations personnel as well as of the humanitarian relief personnel and the civilian population. Therefore, force should be resorted to only as the last alternative.

The escalation of the crisis can still be avoided. The parties involved must now refrain from all acts that might

(Mr. Breitenstein, Finland)

aggravate the situation. They should fully respect the cease-fire agreement that went into effect on 10 February, and without delay either place all the heavy weapons in and around Sarajevo under the control of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), or withdraw them. We hope that awareness of the determination of the international community will now lead the parties to the right conclusions. Thus the crisis can be solved without the use of military force.

The PRESIDENT: The next speaker is the representative of Belgium. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. NOTERDAEME (Belgium) (interpretation from French): Allow me to congratulate you warmly, Sir, on presiding over the Security Council, and also to thank your predecessor, the Ambassador of the Czech Republic, for the fine work he did during the month of January.

On Monday, 7 February 1994, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the European Union expressed their indignation over particularly brutal bombardments that again struck the civilian population of Sarajevo, and supported the early convening of a meeting of the North Atlantic Council to use, in concert with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, all necessary means, including air power, to achieve the immediate lifting of the siege of Sarajevo.

In response to the letter of the United Nations Secretary-General, the Atlantic Council adopted on 9 February a decision making it possible for its members, acting in the framework of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and upon the request of the United Nations, to use air strikes to put an end to indiscriminate artillery fire and to contribute to the

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demilitarization of Sarajevo. The legality of this decision under international law is indisputable. It is clearly in line with Security Council resolutions 824 (1993), 836 (1993) and 844 (1993). Furthermore, it treats all parties equally, because it addresses all heavy weapons, without distinction. Finally, it provides the parties with a certain time for reflection and execution; by cooperating fully in implementing the measures called for, they can avoid the use of air force.

However, only complete implementation of these measures will make it possible to avoid recourse to air power; the mere start of implementation or partial implementation will be insufficient. Indeed, it would show a lack of will by the parties definitively to renounce committing massacres of civilians, such as the one that occurred 5 February. We would also like to emphasize the primary importance we place on the security and freedom of movement of humanitarian and military personnel deployed by the United Nations on the territory of the former Yugoslavia.

In the particularly critical situation we are experiencing, we nevertheless find some reason for hope; based on the essential fact that negotiations are taking place between the parties with the support of countries that are eager to contribute to a peaceful resolution of the crisis.

The international community could no longer remain passive in the face of repeated massacres of innocent civilians, in flagrant violation of every decision taken by the United Nations. The measures contemplated by the European Union and NATO, in close cooperation and coordination with our Secretary-General, and under the authority of relevant resolutions of the Security Council, are designed to allow the conclusion of a cease-fire, leading to the

(Mr. Noterdaeme, Belgium)

demilitarization of Sarajevo and its being placed under international administration. Indeed, we are convinced that lifting the siege of Sarajevo is a first step towards the political settlement whose attainment the international community has been urging on the parties for over two years.

In conclusion, my country supports and reiterates the urgent appeal to the parties that they should finally conform to the expectations and injunctions of the international community.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Belgium for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Saudi Arabia. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. ALLAGANY (Saudi Arabia) (interpretation from Arabic): Allow me at the outset, Sir, to extend to you sincere congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the current month. I would also like to thank your predecessor, Ambassador Karel Kovanda, the Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic, for his efforts during his presidency of the Council last month.

Once again the Security Council is taking up the deteriorating, tragic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, this time in the light of new, grave developments. In the Security Council's handling of this question today, in the light of these developments, the credibility of the Security Council is at stake. In particular, there are at stake the justice of the contemporary international order, which is supposed to seek international legitimacy, and the commitment of the entire international

(Mr. Allagany, Saudi Arabia)

community to use the collective security measures provided for by this international Organization's Charter to protect weaker States, which are the object of liquidation and aggression.

(Mr. Allagany, Saudi Arabia)

We have been profoundly saddened by the failure of this system so far to stand up to the aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina, a Member State of our Organization. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has already warned that if this crisis is not dealt with in conformity with the basic principles and objectives of the new world order, that order will be robbed of its credibility and effectiveness. Hence it is incumbent upon us today to develop the role of the United Nations from that of crisis-management peace-keeping to positive and effective participation in peacemaking.

The international community was horrified, shocked and deeply saddened by the news of the shelling of the central market-place in Sarajevo, which took the lives of a large number of people, mainly elderly women and children. This carnage has been followed by other attack against cities declared "safe areas" in a Security Council resolution. These heinous acts, which in and of themselves constitute an affront to the conscience of the world, prompted the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to seek the authorization, under paragraphs 5, 9 and 10 of Security Council resolution 836 (1993), to prepare for the rapid use of air strikes with a view to deterring further attacks.

To some extent, NATO has responded, but we are still surprised that the Serb forces have for the last three days been waging a vicious campaign against the city of Bihac, one of the regions declared a "safe area" by Security Council resolution 824 (1993). Moreover, that city has been under siege for 22 months, and the Bosnian defence lines are gravely threatened by the great military advantage enjoyed by the Serbs because of the arms embargo against the Muslims imposed on Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Serb forces

(Mr. Allagany, Saudi Arabia)

have exploited the fact that world attention is focused on Sarajevo to attack other parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina and to pursue there the policy of "ethnic cleansing" and genocide. Most of the regions under attack are covered by Security Council resolutions 824 (1993) and 836 (1993).

The term "genocide" is a modern term for an ancient crime. It means the elimination and destruction of an entire ethnic, religious, racial or national group. In the twentieth century, we have witnessed the practices of the Nazis, and today we are witnessing the practices of the Serb forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The continuation of the genocide unleashed against the people of this fledgling republic at the hands of the Serb forces, supported by Serbia and Montenegro, threatens the international community with dire consequences and constitutes a very sensitive present and future problem in international relations. This ongoing tragedy, which has claimed the lives of thousands of innocent persons and displaced large numbers of peaceful citizens in that country, would not have taken place but for the inaction of the international community, which allowed the forces of aggression to reap the fruits of their aggression and to pursue their abominable policy of "ethnic cleansing" with impunity.

This indecision resulted from the position of the European States, which thwarted the full implementation of the London Conference resolutions and the Vance-Owen plan. We are, however, surprised that when Croatia was the object of Serb aggression the European States immediately stood by it and assisted it militarily, which contributed to the success of international endeavours to reach a peaceful settlement there.

(Mr. Allagany, Saudi Arabia)

The statement that what is happening in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a civil war is an attempt to mislead world public opinion and to project the Serbs as parties to an internal dispute. What is happening in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a blatant act of aggression supported by evil forces which have inherited their way of thinking from the Nazis of Europe. Today, we call on the NATO States - especially the European ones - to undertake a new reading of the new situation. We interpret the recent NATO decision as an ultimatum to the Serb forces to halt their aggression, and an affirmation that negotiations are the only way to achieve a peaceful settlement.

The war of aggression raging in Bosnia and Herzegovina today is taking place on European land. History clearly shows that European wars have never been limited wars and that any spark in Europe can cause an unlimited conflagration.

The Security Council has adopted more than 40 resolutions regarding the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is high time for the Council to review the situation and decide what specific actions it will now take in order to reach the necessary settlement, taking into account that as long as there are hostilities in any part of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as long as there is an aggressor and a victim of aggression, any possible negotiated settlement will not be just and therefore will not be lasting.

We hope that the history of European wars will not repeat itself, and that the solution currently proposed will not give rise to future conflicts and wars. We also hope that the international community will take into serious and rational consideration the demands of Bosnia and Herzegovina, affirming that Bosnia and Herzegovina will never again be the object of policies of

(Mr. Allagany, Saudi Arabia)

aggression and "ethnic cleansing", and responding to the demands of this fledgling State for an outlet to the sea and for the right to self-defence provided for by the Charter.

From the very outset, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, its people and its Government have stood by the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a position of principle. My country has already announced its support for the resolutions and recommendations of the recent London Conference, the United Nations and the Geneva negotiations.

(Mr. Allagany, Saudi Arabia)

In this position, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia based itself on strict adherence to international legitimacy and respect for the principles of international law. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia calls upon the international community promptly to take all the actions provided for by the Charter of the United Nations to implement the Security Council resolutions adopted under Chapter VII, which allow the use of force to compel the intransigent Serbian party into observing the rules of international legitimacy. Saudi Arabia also calls on the international community to affirm the need for the implementation of the Security Council resolutions relevant to safe areas, especially resolution 836 (1993), which grants Member States the right to use air strikes to protect safe areas, including Sarajevo, and support the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the exercise of its legitimate right of self-defence, as provided for in Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.

The provisions of the Charter are clear, and international resolutions are forthright. Hence the Security Council must shoulder its responsibilities and put an end to the ongoing human tragedy in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which jeopardizes the credibility of this international Organization and that of the new international order in general.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Saudi Arabia for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Sudan. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. YASSIN (Sudan) (interpretation from Arabic): Allow me to extend thanks to you, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to address the Security Council. I should also like to congratulate

(Mr. Yassin, Sudan)

you on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month, which is replete with serious and significant events. I am certain that your wise guidance will greatly contribute to the Council's achieving just and positive results. We should also like to congratulate the President of the Council last month, the Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic, Ambassador Karel Kovanda, who also skillfully discharged the duties of the presidency.

The tragedy of the Muslim people of Bosnia is one of the challenges which will continue to haunt the conscience of the world and furnish proof of the inability of the international community to champion the lofty principles and ethical values represented by the Charter of this international Organization. The international community has continued to deal with a question relevant to the fate of an entire people on the basis of a double standard. This people is threatened by annihilation through the policies of "ethnic cleansing", concentration camps and humiliation, through the use of such Nazi and fascist means as systematic rape and other such shameful acts.

The long silence observed by the international community - especially the Security Council - and its slowness in putting an end to Serbian aggression, allowed the aggressors to implement all their sinister designs against the Muslim people of Bosnia, whose wound has been aggravated by the international community, which deprived it of its most rudimentary right to self-defence and to life and which penalized it by depriving it of weapons under resolution 713 (1991).

The outrageous crimes perpetrated by the Serbs on 4 and 5 February against defenceless citizens in Dobrinja and Sarajevo,

(Mr. Yassin, Sudan)

which claimed the lives of scores of people and inflicted injuries on hundreds, cruelly shocked the international community, which forced those who have been silent in the face of the continuing Serbian crimes to take action, which we had thought would deter the aggressor. But now we see that those actions have also become captive of a narrow discriminatory view and balances of interests, which has caused them to fall short of the grave event.

Addressing a 10-day ultimatum to the Serbians has enabled them to resort to manoeuvres and deception. Thus, they declared a cease-fire at the outset, but soon began threatening vengeance. Also, the ultimatum was confined to calling upon the Serbs to withdraw their heavy weapons while calling upon the Bosnian Government to give up its weapons in the context of the demilitarization of Sarajevo. These actions shield the Serbian forces with the international forces. This results in the continued siege of Sarajevo by the Serbs while they maintain their military capabilities, shelling Sarajevo and other Muslim cities in Bosnia with the heavy weapons that no one called on them to give up.

At the same time, there are some who want to reward the aggressor by giving up the principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force by calling upon the Bosnian Government to make those concessions that appease the aggressor. Sudan has always stood in full sympathy with the Muslim people of Bosnia, who are the object of conspiracies and annihilation. We have declared our stand on the side of that people, which is undergoing its ordeal because of its religion. We call upon the international community and the Security Council to heed the dictates of conscience and justice and to renounce selectivity and

(Mr. Yassin, Sudan)

double standards when dealing with the destiny of a people threatened with annihilation.

In conformity with the responsibilities of Sudan as a Member of the United Nations and in response to the appeal of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, I am honoured to announce that Sudan is willing to put Sudanese forces to work in the context of the United Nations Protection Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I should also like to associate myself with those calling upon the Security Council to follow the example of the General Assembly in lifting the arms embargo against Bosnia so that it can exercise its right to self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter, thus enabling it to meet its arms requirements and receive assistance from its brothers to deter Serbian aggression.

Lastly, I cannot but express appreciation to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his long-awaited and brave initiative. I hope he will pursue this initiative with a profound interest in saving the innocents in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Sudan for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Ireland. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. HAYES (Ireland): Permit me first of all, Sir, to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. We look forward to your continued skilful exercise of the functions of this office throughout the month of February. May I also thank your predecessor, the Permanent

(Mr. Hayes, Ireland)

Representative of the Czech Republic, Ambassador Kovanda, for his very able performance of the duties of that office in January.

The Irish Government utterly condemns the ruthless and barbaric acts of violence against the population of Sarajevo, which have continued for almost two years. These actions, for which no justifications can be offered - and none accepted - are designed to kill, maim and demoralize the civilian population of that beleaguered city.

(Mr. Hayes, Ireland)

The systematic and callous onslaught directed against Sarajevo's population by heavy weapons, mortars and sniper bullets has clearly been at enormous cost to that city's population. It is difficult to calculate the losses precisely, but some sources estimate that 10,500 people have been killed and perhaps 58,000 wounded in Sarajevo.

The death and suffering which have been inflicted on Sarajevo were graphically highlighted once more by the barbaric killings in the central market on 5 February. This left 68 people dead and scores more maimed and seriously injured.

Faced with the continued siege and bombardment of Sarajevo, the United Nations Secretary-General has concluded that the mortar attacks against civilian targets in Sarajevo, at least one of which has been established by the United Nations to be the work of the Bosnian Serb forces, made it necessary to prepare urgently for the use of air strikes to deter further attacks. He therefore asked the Secretary General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to obtain at the earliest possible date a decision by the North Atlantic Council to authorize the Commander in Chief of NATO's Southern Command to launch air strikes, at the request of the United Nations, against artillery or mortar positions in or around Sarajevo which are determined by the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) to be responsible for attacks against civilian targets in that city.

The Council of Ministers of the European Union, meeting in Brussels on 7 February, condemned the brutal shelling of civilians in Sarajevo. In the light of the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the request of the Secretary-General, the Ministers supported an early meeting of the North Atlantic Council

(Mr. Hayes, Ireland)

to consider measures to bring about the immediate lifting of the siege of Sarajevo.

The decisions of the North Atlantic Council taken last Wednesday make it clear that the international community cannot and will not tolerate the siege and bombardment of a defenceless city. The Irish Government calls on all parties to respect the cease-fire in Sarajevo and to comply fully with the demands for the withdrawal of heavy weapons or their regrouping under UNPROFOR control. The actions by the international community over the past week are intended to contribute to the basic objectives of establishing a cease-fire, of demilitarizing Sarajevo and of placing it under international supervision. They are an initial step towards realizing the political settlement supported by the European Union.

In this context, the Irish Government believes that the international community must intensify its efforts to achieve three essential aims: to maintain and develop the search for a peaceful settlement to the dispute on the basis of the European Union's peace plan; to prevent the spread of the conflict; and to ensure the supply and delivery of humanitarian assistance to the victims.

The Irish Government hopes that even at this late stage the parties to the conflict - in particular, the Bosnian Serbs - will realize the futility of continuing the war and that they will return to the talks determined to find a negotiated solution.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Ireland for his kind words addressed to me.

In accordance with the decision taken earlier in the meeting, I now invite Ambassador Dragomir Djokić to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. DJOKIĆ: The brutality of the 5 February massacre of innocent civilians in the market-place in Sarajevo has painfully demonstrated once again the necessity of urgently reaching a political solution to the civil and ethnic war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia received with dismay and horror the news of this massacre and strongly condemned this terrorist act. Those who were killed or wounded in Sarajevo were victims not of war but of war criminals. Such a cowardly act, which appalled all those who truly seek to achieve peace in the former Bosnia and Herzegovina, requires a vigorous and impartial investigation so that the perpetrators of this horrible act will be brought immediately to justice.

The Yugoslav Government has appealed to all those involved in the peace process not to allow any political or media manipulations of this tragic event and to invest vigorous efforts in order to prevent any obstruction of the peace process and demonstrate perseverance and resolve while striving to achieve a just and lasting peace in the former Bosnia and Herzegovina. Unfortunately, instead of considering what can be done in Bosnia and Herzegovina to give a decisive impetus to the peace process, some countries took advantage of this event to promote their own political and propaganda goals.

Today's meeting of the Security Council is taking place at a time when some important international actors have opted for the use of force as a method of putting pressure on one of the sides in the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina instead of encouraging all three sides to achieve peace through negotiations. The recent decision by the Council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is politically and militarily unwise and could have serious consequences on the ground which will undoubtedly aggravate the

(Mr. Djokić)

already complex situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is very unlikely that the decision on the use of air strikes against any - I repeat, "against any" - of the three sides to the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina may help bring about a lasting political settlement. Therefore, my country strongly opposes any such decision. This is yet another in a series of grave mistakes which have been made by the international community in addressing the Yugoslav crisis, which, as many are now increasingly aware, started with the premature recognition of some former Yugoslav republics.

The NATO decision has only made the prospects for the solution of the crisis more uncertain and bleak. We believe that the Security Council should very carefully and cautiously review the present situation, fully aware of its gravity and complexity.

The decision of the Council of NATO clearly does not fall within the purview of the relevant resolutions of the Security Council authorizing air strikes. Therefore, any attempt to carry out air strikes on the basis of that decision will represent a direct involvement in the civil war on one side.

If a true objective is peace for Bosnia and Herzegovina, then the use of force cannot be the instrument to that end. The use of force is extremely dangerous in the prevailing circumstances in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Those who advocate it shall bear the responsibility for the inevitable consequences and the possible spillover of the conflict.

(Mr. Djokić)

From the very onset of the crisis, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has strongly believed that there is no alternative to an overall political settlement. A settlement can be reached only in negotiations between the three constituent peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina: the Serbs, Muslims and Croats. The Yugoslav Government is ready to accept any political solution reached by those parties. In that context, we also believe that the international community and particularly the United Nations, including the Security Council, bear primary responsibility, and that they should do everything in their power to contribute to finding a political settlement and that they should encourage the Bosnian parties along the path towards peace.

A Co-Chairman of the International Conference, Mr. Stoltenberg, just two weeks ago informed the members of the Council about the present status of the peace negotiations. He pointed out that the parties involved are close to a final agreement and that major parts of the peace package have been agreed. He also mentioned some obstacles, but from his statement it was obvious that two parties were ready to sign the peace package. Unfortunately, the third side, namely the Bosnian Muslims, opted for a continuation of the war, and has repeatedly been advancing new conditions in order to obstruct the achievement of a peace agreement.

For months now, the Muslim side has rejected all peace projects which have been portrayed by the Co-Chairmen as fair and reasonable. They have unfortunately been encouraged in this position by influential elements in the international community that have been driven by ulterior motives and their own strategic interests. It is obvious that this has led the Muslim side to

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believe that foreign military intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina would be forthcoming.

In contrast, the Bosnian Serbs, who have proved their readiness to accept a viable compromise by offering numerous concessions, are constantly being subjected to pressure and threats.

Yugoslavia expects that, in the light of this situation, the international community will make it clear to the Muslim side that it only stands to lose if it persists with the war option. Unfortunately, instead of convincing the Muslim side to go along with the peace proposal, we are faced with the fact that some influential countries are now ready to use force, thus jeopardizing the results of the negotiations reached so far.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia will, as it has done so far, continue to make its full contribution to the peace process and to ending the war in the former Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although not a party to the civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia will spare no effort to help remedy the present situation and find a just and lasting solution based on the legitimate interests and rights of all peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The members of the Council are aware of the efforts of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia within the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia in Geneva and of its firm commitment to peace, despite the harsh and inhumane sanctions unjustly imposed against it.

The Yugoslav Government wishes to reiterate its firm support for the current negotiations in Geneva, and strongly urges the international community and the United Nations, including the

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Security Council, to reinforce their support for the only possible solution to the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina - a solution achieved through political means.

Therefore, rather than threats and ultimatums, it would be more useful if we all, particularly those who can exert great influence on some of the Bosnian parties, helped them put an end to the nightmare in which they have found themselves. Once you pull a trigger, it is difficult to stop. If that proves to be the case, the Council will certainly have its share of responsibility.

In connection with some of the statements made during our debate, my delegation would like to offer the following comments.

We categorically reject the ill-intentioned, biased, unwarranted and unfounded allegations against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia that have been put forward by certain delegations. It is particularly disturbing that some of them have gone so far as to condemn, without any reservation, the Bosnian Serb side for the tragic massacre of innocent civilians in the Sarajevo market-place on 5 February. It is indeed surprising that they are so sure in their conclusions while it is well known that United Nations Protection Force representatives in Sarajevo have been explicit in their official statements that, so far, it has not been possible to establish which side was to blame for the tragedy. On the contrary: those statements, and the findings of a number of foreign and also Yugoslav experts indicate that the Bosnian Serb side did not commit and could not have committed this tragic and criminal act.

Those delegations that have chosen to advance uncorroborated allegations have, by their biased positions, shown their true intentions, which are not directed towards reaching a just and

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lasting peaceful solution in Bosnia and Herzegovina. They are clearly attempting to use this tragic event as a pretext for foreign military intervention against one of the parties in the civil war. Such positions do not contribute to ending the ethnic and civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina: on the contrary, they generate a further escalation of the flames of war, whose consequences are increasingly being felt by the innocent population.

Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina cannot be achieved through one-sided accusations or irrational demands for the lifting of the arms embargo for one of the sides, nor through the escalation of military activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The only possible solution is and must be a political one.

The PRESIDENT: The next speaker is the representative of Ukraine. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement now.

Mr. KHANDOGY (Ukraine): First of all let me congratulate you, Sir, upon your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of February. The delegation of Ukraine is confident that your experience and outstanding diplomatic skills will help you find a wise and effective solution to the problem we are discussing now. Let me convey through you, Mr. President, our appreciation to your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to the United Nations, Ambassador Karel Kovanda, for the excellent work he did in January.

There is no need to stress the importance of the issue under consideration or the responsibility of the members of the Council for the results of this discussion. They have been amply illustrated in many statements in this Chamber.

(Mr. Khandogy, Ukraine)

The representative of Ukraine, addressing the Council over six months ago, took the opportunity to express great concern in respect of this senseless, fratricidal war which every day brought new victims, new suffering and new destruction. Unfortunately, the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina has deteriorated even further.

(Mr. Khandogy, Ukraine)

The international community learned with indignation and alarm of the terrorist act in the centre of Sarajevo on 5 February, which resulted in the death of dozens and the wounding of hundreds of innocent civilians. The Government and the people of Ukraine resolutely condemned this barbaric, inhuman action undertaken at a moment when the parties concerned were engaged in an intensive search for ways to settle the bloody conflict.

As a result of this provocation, the situation in the Balkans has reached a critical point. A significant part of world public opinion considers that the only way to secure the safety of the civilian population of Sarajevo and other regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina is to resort to air strikes against Bosnian Serb positions. The recent decision of the North Atlantic Council of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) reflects that position.

We cannot but understand the emotional basis for such an approach, and we consider the NATO decision as yet another important element of international efforts aimed at resolving the Yugoslav crisis that under certain circumstances could bring about positive results.

However, it is necessary to be fully aware of the possible negative consequences of such a step. Undoubtedly, in that eventuality the situation on all fronts in Bosnia and Herzegovina would be greatly aggravated. This would bring about new suffering and human loss, primarily among the civilian population of this country. Moreover, it would effectively jeopardize the delivery of the international humanitarian aid, which has become the only source of subsistence for the majority of people.

(Mr. Khandogy, Ukraine)

As the contributor of a military contingent to the Sarajevo sector of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), Ukraine cannot but voice its deep concern about the fact that as a result of air strikes, even limited ones, UNPROFOR could become a target for retaliatory strikes by radical field commanders of the Serb forces. In that event, the United Nations could find itself deeply involved in fully fledged armed confrontations, with unpredictable military and political consequences, not only for the region, but for the whole world.

Ukraine calls upon the Security Council to reiterate to the warring parties its categorical demand immediately to stop military actions, intensify negotiations and do everything possible to prevent the escalation and spread of the armed conflict in the Balkans as a result of the tragic events of 5 February in Sarajevo.

In that connection, we also appeal to the members of the Security Council not to yield to emotions and to adopt the only correct decision, which would show the way out of the present situation.

My delegation would like to stress that we do not rule out the possibility of using all necessary means, including force, in a situation in which we are dealing with deliberate hostile acts against areas of deployment of United Nations contingents, where we simply do not have other options for stopping the killing of innocent people, including elderly people and children.

But such a course of action should be undertaken only in the event of a clearly expressed decision by the international community, namely, the Security Council, and not as a result of a decision by an individual State. The seriousness of the matter requires that in this situation all relevant procedures in

(Mr. Khandogy, Ukraine)

accordance with the United Nations Charter should be employed in order to reaffirm once again previous resolutions of the Security Council regarding the complex situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Ukraine shares the view that one viable solution to this crisis might be an effective cease-fire agreement between the warring parties and the placing of their heavy weapons under UNPROFOR control, the withdrawal of Serb units from Sarajevo and the takeover of their positions by the United Nations Protection Force. The demilitarization of Sarajevo and the introduction of United Nations administrative control in the city would stop the senseless bloodshed and would serve as a starting-point for the achievement of lasting peace in the region.

We are satisfied with the fact that the majority of Security Council members regard the continuation and deepening of the peace process in the Balkans as an indispensable condition for the settlement of the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the view of my delegation, the time has come to address seriously the question of the effectiveness of economic sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the context of an overall settlement, with the aim of mitigating the adverse consequences of the sanctions regime on the economies of third countries, in accordance with Article 50 of the United Nations Charter.

Finally, the delegation of Ukraine would like to assure members of the Council and all parties concerned that the Ukrainian contingent, which is fulfilling the humanitarian mission of protecting safe areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina, will continue to contribute to the cessation of the armed confrontation in the region.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Ukraine for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Portugal. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. CATARINO (Portugal): Allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on the manner in which you have steered the deliberations of the Council during the month of February. I would like also to extend my compliments to Ambassador Kovanda on his presidency of the Council in January.

The tragic incident in the market of Sarajevo served to drive home even further the horror of the war that has for two years devastated Bosnia and Herzegovina, and of the terrible suffering of the civilian population. The absurd cycle of war must be broken, and the parties to the conflict must understand that the continuation of war and violence is an unsustainable policy.

Portugal has actively supported the efforts of the international community to alleviate the consequences of the fighting and to help the parties reach a negotiated settlement. Within the European Union, we have given and will continue to give all our support to the diplomatic efforts that are being pursued by the Co-Chairmen of the Steering Committee of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia.

We believe that the European Plan of Action, which was presented to the parties in Geneva and whose basic principles have been accepted by them, constitutes the key to the settlement of the conflict, and we appeal to the parties to pursue this initial commitment to peace with vigour, and to show the flexibility necessary to reach a common position on a final settlement of the question.

(Mr. Catarino, Portugal)

We believe it is equally vital that humanitarian assistance be allowed to reach the people in need and that the international community continue to demonstrate its solidarity. In that respect, we cannot fail to emphasize our gratitude to the men and women of UNPROFOR and of all the other humanitarian agencies and organizations in Bosnia who work tirelessly day in and day out to bring food, medicine and other humanitarian supplies to those who have been caught in the middle of the violence.

But the violence must stop, and the international community and the United Nations have a responsibility to act, in the face of the worsening situation, in a joint and coordinated manner within the context of the resolutions already approved by the Security Council. The 9 February decision of the North Atlantic Council, which we fully support, will surely contribute to the basic objective of putting an end to the siege of Sarajevo.

(Mr. Catarino, Portugal)

We hope that the decision will lead to the establishment of a cease-fire, the initiation of the demilitarization of Sarajevo and the placing of the city under international administration by the United Nations. By its decision NATO seeks, with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the achievement of these basic objectives on the way to a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

Peace is, after all, our objective.

While the determination of NATO to act cannot be questioned, we sincerely hope that it will not be necessary to resort to force and that the parties to the conflict will respond positively and immediately to the appeals of the Secretary-General and the Security Council and put an end to their acts of violence, comply with what is demanded of them and return to a purposeful and committed process of negotiation to achieve a lasting settlement to the question agreeable to all. Let there be no mistake. The war will come to an end only when the parties themselves decide to stop fighting.

We are fully aware of the very great risks that the international community's efforts to bring peace to Bosnia entail. The lives of the civilian population and of the very brave people of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), United Nations and relief agencies are constantly in danger. For their sake, we counsel prudence as well as resolve on the part of the international community in seeing its tasks through. For their sake also, we call for peace.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Portugal for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Luxembourg. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. WOLZFELD (Luxembourg) (interpretation from French): First, Sir, may I extend to you my sincerest congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. I am convinced that under your distinguished guidance the Council will be able to conclude its work successfully. My congratulations are also extended to your predecessor, Ambassador Kovanda, for the noteworthy manner in which he conducted the work of the Council last month.

Allow me at the outset to welcome the occasion today afforded the Member States of our Organization to speak before the Security Council in the course of this debate on the tragedy that is occurring before our very eyes in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

For more than two years now the international community has witnessed, often helplessly, the worst ordeals being inflicted on the civilian population of Bosnia and Herzegovina, whether in the form of "ethnic cleansing" or of the random shelling of cities.

The recent tragic incident in the market-place of Sarajevo highlighted the urgent need to put an end to the hostilities immediately and to resolve the conflict around the negotiating table rather than on the battlefield.

The European Union, of which my country is a member, has been cooperating very closely with the United Nations in seeking a peaceful and durable solution through the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, while the United Nations Protection Force

(Mr. Wolzfeld, Luxembourg)

(UNPROFOR) has been endeavouring in difficult conditions to supply minimal provisions and health assistance to the population.

In this connection, the European Union has proposed a plan of action to resolve the Bosnian crisis which would put the conflict in Bosnia within the broader context of the former Yugoslavia. That is a necessary condition for ensuring the viability of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is true that the agreement, which has yet to be finalized among the Bosnian parties, is complex and far from perfect; nevertheless, we continue to believe that this plan is still pertinent and in keeping with current realities, and that it is in fact the only feasible way to establish a lasting peace.

But, whatever efforts are made by the international community, the success of the negotiations will ultimately depend on the parties themselves. As long as one party considers that military gains remain possible on the ground, the chances of a successful outcome to the negotiations are compromised.

All the peoples, groups and minorities of the former Yugoslavia, as well as their leaders must understand that their respective communities can survive and prosper in a state of restored peace only by the negotiation of a political settlement acceptable to all. Conflicting interests cannot peacefully coexist unless the protagonists are prepared to reach compromises and to respect them.

My Government fully supports the efforts being made by Co-Chairmen Owen and Stoltenberg to bri[illegible]bout a negotiated settlement. We also welcome the fact [illegible]the Governments of the United States of America and of the Rus[illegible]an Federation have indicated that they are now prepared to go further in a process

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intended to convince the parties concerned to pursue compromise and negotiation in good faith.

At the same time, the Security Council has issued numerous warnings and decisions to try to convince the belligerents to respect the principles of international law, to resolve their differences peacefully and to guarantee the protection of innocent civilian populations. These Council decisions have repeatedly been ignored.

Therefore, the North Atlantic Council, pursuant to decisions of the Security Council and acting in concert with the United Nations Secretary-General, decided last Wednesday to send a clear signal to the parties, and, obviously, particularly to the Bosnian Serbs, demanding the raising of the siege in Sarajevo. It indicated that it was prepared to use force should its conditions not be met. The action designed to demilitarize Sarajevo is not a military end in itself; rather, it represents a stage in the search for a comprehensive negotiated political solution.

We expect that the international community will support the decision, which gives the Security Council the means to implement its decisions. What is at stake here, after all, is the credibility of our Organization - and others.

My country is particularly aware of the need to keep the supply lines open for humanitarian aid, which allows the civilian populations in Bosnia to survive in the horrifying conditions in which they find themselves. Before concluding, I wish to pay a particular tribute to what is being done for them under extremely difficult circumstances by UNPROFOR and the international organizations, which have shown exemplary courage and devotion.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Luxembourg for his kind words addressed to me.

The last speaker for this morning is the representative of Denmark. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. HAAKONSEN (Denmark): The tragic situation in the former Yugoslavia is one of our greatest concerns and an extremely demanding challenge to all of us.

The latest events in Sarajevo have caused revulsion everywhere and have led to a series of important meetings: in the European Union, the North Atlantic Council and now in the Security Council. We welcome this.

The international community has already, for more than two years, done its utmost to deal with the crises in the former Yugoslavia.

From the outset Denmark has offered a substantial and increasing contribution to the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) and to the humanitarian aid efforts.

We have steadily maintained that the only acceptable outcome is a negotiated settlement. A lasting peace can be reached only by negotiations, and cannot be imposed by force from the outside. Unfortunately, the political will to seek such a negotiated settlement has been lacking among the parties directly concerned.

The European Union action plan remains on the table as a basis for negotiations. Progress has been made on the basis of this plan, but sufficient flexibility and willingness to compromise is still needed.

We wholeheartedly support the untiring efforts of the Co-Chairmen of the International Conference on the Former

(Mr. Haakonsen, Denmark)

Yugoslavia to reach a peaceful settlement. We urge them to continue and reinforce their efforts.

Denmark participated in and fully endorses the decision by the North Atlantic Council on 9 February. We see this decision as a very important step towards an urgent peaceful solution in order to bring the conflict to an end.

At the same time, we direct a strong appeal to the parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina to give a positive response to what has been called for by the North Atlantic Council. In that case, much will have been achieved. Denmark is prepared to continue and intensify its efforts, especially within the framework of the European Union, to reach an end to this tragic and appalling chapter in European history. In this context, we also stand solidly behind the efforts of the United Nations and the Secretary-General.

The PRESIDENT: In view of the lateness of the hour, I intend to suspend the meeting now.

The meeting was suspended at 1.25 p.m.